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PATENT

UNITED STATES PATENT APPLICATION
FOR
CIRCUIT BOARD WITH ADDED IMPEDANCE

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CIRCUIT BOARD WITH ADDED IMPEDANCE

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to semiconductor devices and electronic circuit boards.

More particularly, the present invention is directed to added impedance in semiconductor devices

25 and electronic circuit boards.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Current designs of semiconductor circuits require certain impedances between the power plane and the ground plane. These impedances are generally placed on the die or on the substrate of the circuitry. For example, decoupling capacitors are typically placed in circuits, between the power plane and ground plane, to stabilize any undue voltage fluctuations in the traces. Similarly, resistances may also be used at various locations in circuits to add impedance.

Fig. 1 illustrates a semiconductor circuit with added impedance using known methods.

Between a power plane 10 and ground 16, a surface mount capacitor 12 and a surface mount

35 resistor 14 is added. Capacitor 12 and resistor 14 are usually hand-soldered on the substrate

5 requiring additional resources. They also occupy precious real estate on the substrate. In addition, due to the considerable length of the trace (L) between power plane 10 and ground 16, the trace can act as an antenna for electromagnetic interference ("EMI") and other high frequency noises.

Based on the foregoing, there is a need for an improved method and apparatus for adding
10 impedance between planes in a semiconductor circuit.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

One embodiment of the present invention is a circuit board that includes two planes. A via spans the planes, and an impedance component is placed in the via. The impedance
15 component is coupled to both of the planes.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 illustrates in a semiconductor circuit with added impedance using known methods.

Fig. 2 illustrates a circuit board in accordance with one embodiment of the present
20 invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

One embodiment of the present invention is a circuit board that includes impedance components inserted in the vias between two planes.

25 Fig. 2 illustrates a circuit board 50 in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. Circuit board 50 includes four layers: signal planes 20 and 26; a power plane 22; and a ground plane 24. Power plane 22 and ground plane 24 are sandwiched around a substrate core

5 36. Circuit board 50 further includes a pad 32, and copper ("Cu") traces 61-64. Finally, circuit board 50 includes multiple vias 34 and 36 that are openings spanning two or more planes.

In order to add impedance between planes of circuit board 50, an impedance component is inserted inside a via and coupled to each of the planes. An impedance component is a circuit device that adds impedance, such as a resistor or a capacitor. In the example shown in Fig. 2, an
10 impedance component 40 is placed inside via 34 and connects power plane 22 directly to ground plane 24.

If a resistance impedance is desired, in one embodiment a resistor is formed by rolling carbon material into a cylinder of approximately the same diameter as via 34. The "roll" is then cut into the desired height approximating the height of via 34, and is capped with conductive
15 material. The resistor roll is then press fitted into via 34 using, for example, forced air, and each cap is coupled to one of the planes.

If a capacitance impedance is desired, in one embodiment a capacitor is formed by rolling a sandwich of a dielectric material on top of conductive material to the desired diameter. The "roll" is then cut to the desired height, and the interior and exterior of the roll is capped. The
20 capacitor roll is then press fitted into via 34 and each cap is coupled to one of the planes.

By placing an impedance component in a via of a circuit board, various advantages over prior art methods of adding impedance are achieved. The advantages include: eliminating the process of hand soldering the capacitor/resistor; not occupying any real estate on the circuit board; and eliminating high frequency noise that would otherwise be picked up by a trace.

25 As described, the present invention places impedance components in vias of a circuit board in order to add impedance between planes. This eliminates many problems associated with adding impedance through trace lines and hand soldered components.

5 Several embodiments of the present invention are specifically illustrated and/or described herein. However, it will be appreciated that modifications and variations of the present invention are covered by the above teachings and within the purview of the appended claims without departing from the spirit and intended scope of the invention.

For example, although a four layer circuit board is illustrated, any number of layers can
10 utilize the invention in order to add impedance between two of the layers.